

# ICCAT 2025

## A decisive session for the sustainable management of bluefin tuna

GOVERNANCE, SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT UNDER PRESSURE

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# GENERAL CONTEXT: A HIGHLY TENSE SESSION



THE 2025 ICCAT MEETING WAS MARKED BY UNPRECEDENTED DIVERGENCES BETWEEN CPCS ON TAC LEVELS AND QUOTA ALLOCATION.

- The recent integration of CKMR methods, combined with the Management Procedure (MP/MSE), was supposed to bring stability and predictability : **BR = 45 191T & BR\* = 48 403 T**

Instead, the debates revealed:

- A strong offensive from the United States, challenging MP parameters;
- A European Union focused on scientific stability;
- Significant fragmentation between CPCs, on allocation key with incompatible proposals.

Additional concerns: growing issues with control, IUU activities in parts of the Mediterranean, and the need to maintain full compliance with the MSE



# THE BLUEFIN TUNA BATTLEFIELD

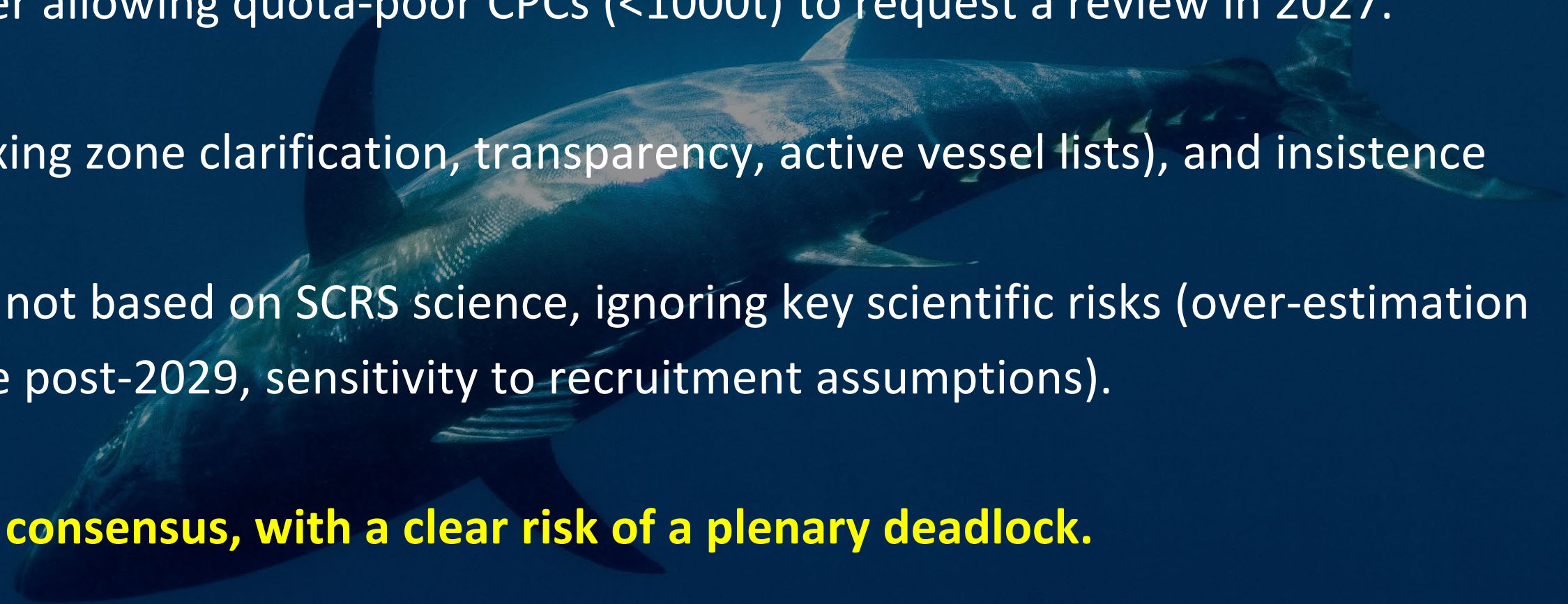
## PA2 – IRRECONCILABLE POSITIONS ON TAC AND ALLOCATION

- The PA2 Chair presented several proposals (631A, 632A...) attempting to rebalance allocations, but none satisfied the CPCs.
- Western stock: debate on a TAC increase and activation of “exceptional circumstances” if exceeded in 2026.
- Eastern stock: addition of §4ter allowing quota-poor CPCs (<1000t) to request a review in 2027.

**EU:** technical improvements (mixing zone clarification, transparency, active vessel lists), and insistence on scientific coherence.

**USA:** demand for a higher quota not based on SCRS science, ignoring key scientific risks (over-estimation of productivity, predicted decline post-2029, sensitivity to recruitment assumptions).

Result until plenary session : **no consensus, with a clear risk of a plenary deadlock.**







# THE CRITICAL MOMENT: USA VS EU

## A DIRECT CONFRONTATION THREATENING THE MSE

The United States is requesting:

- a significant quota increase
  - a redistribution from the biggest quota holders (EU, Japan...)
  - and a revision of parameters validated by the SCRS.
- These demands are political, not scientific.

### Identified risks:

- ✓ Breaking the Management Procedure (MP)
- ✓ Undermining the entire MSE framework
- ✓ Reversing 20 years of stock rebuilding
- ✓ Damaging ICCAT's scientific credibility

The EU, supported by most CPCs, insists that TAC choices must remain science-driven (BR) and not politically imposed



# FINAL PROPOSALS & IMPLICATIONS

## OPPORTUNITY VS STRUCTURAL RISKS

Chair's proposal (PA2-632): globally favourable for the EU (PA2-637): (+15%)

BUT :

- EU share decreases from 53% to 51% → risk of a sharp quota decline after 2028
- No real satisfaction for any CPC
- Unresolved structural tensions with the USA.

✓ Short-term quota gains for the EU

✓ Long-term vulnerability of EU share

✗ Continued pressure from the USA likely outside the MSE framework

**Control & monitoring:** strong reminder of maintaining high enforcement standards, especially in the Mediterranean where IUU risks are increasing.



# RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED

**PA2-637A** - Draft Recommendation by ICCAT to amend Recommendation 22-10 for a conservation and management plan for western Atlantic bluefin tuna (based on document PA2\_631A/2025 by Panel 2 Chair)  
*(United States, European Union and Canada)*

**TAC annuel pour 2026-2028 :** **3.081,6 t**

États-Unis	1.509,98 t	Royaume-Uni (Bermudes)	7,09 t
Canada	623,72 t	France (Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon)	7,09 t
Japon	762,39 t	Mexique	171,34 t

**PA2-604** - Draft Resolution by ICCAT amending Resolution 22-07 on a pilot project for the short-term live storage of bluefin tuna - *(Norway)*

**PA2-609A** - Recommendation by ICCAT for a pilot project for farming bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) and yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*) in waters of the Canary Islands - *(European Union)*

**PA2-605** Revised draft template for the capacity table of eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishing, farming, inspection, and capacity management plans - *(Secretariat)*

# RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED

**PA2-636B** - Draft Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 24-05 establishing a multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean (based on the Panel 2 Chair’s proposal PA2\_632A/2025) - **(European Union)**

- *A quota for the Est-Med at 48,403 T for 2026–2028 (+19%) in line with the management procedure.*
- *A new allocation key, with EU 52% (25,165 tonnes, +16%), modifying the balance between CPCs*
- *Several additional elements such as:*
  - *Stricter management of under-consumption (a possible TAC reduction of up to 50% for CPCs that take less than half of their quota);*
  - *A change in the Mediterranean purse-seine fishing season moving the opening date from 26 May to 19 May.*

CPC	Annual Quota in 2026-2028 (t)		48 403 T
European Union	25 164,62	Korea	368,93
Morocco	4 379,47	China	286,15
Japan	3 559,41	Iceland	253,14
Tunisia	3 508,85	Syria	238,00
Türkiye	3 094,45	United Kingdom	230,56
Libya	2 950,03	Chinese Taipei	101,00
Algeria	2 443,64	Mauritania	55,00
Egypt	549,00	Namibia	55,00
Norway	461,38	Panama	55,00
Albania	457,37	Senegal	55,00
Subtotal	48 266,00		
Research	20,00		
Unallocated Reserves	117,00		



# A TURNING POINT FOR ICCAT



## ICCAT 2025 highlights a critical turning point:

- Unprecedented political tension
- MP parameters being challenged by a major CPC
- An urgent need to protect SCRS integrity

## Role of the EU:

- ✓ defending stability
- ✓ maintaining strict adherence to science
- ✓ adopting a precautionary approach

## Priority for 2026–2028:

- Prevent political decisions detached from science
- Ensure continuity of the Management Procedure
- Strengthen control and fight IUU
- Safeguard the success of the Bluefin recovery.